

FOREWORD

The editors of the *Polar Record* have changed the cover of the journal to mark the completion of twenty years of publication. The picture is taken from an illustration of the *Belgica*, originally published on p. 171 of *Voyage de la Belgica. Quinze mois dans l'Antarctique* (Bruxelles, 1902) by Adrian de Gerlache, leader of the Belgian Antarctic Expedition, 1897–99. The picture, showing the *Belgica* in the Antarctic pack ice, is reproduced here by courtesy of Baron de Gerlache de Gomery, the son of the explorer.

The subject of our frontispiece, Professor Hans W:son Ahlmann, the doyen of European glaciology, has recently been appointed Swedish Ambassador in Norway. The loss to science becomes the gain to Scandinavian co-operation, a field in which Professor Ahlmann has already done so much, perhaps his foremost achievement in this direction being the initiation of the present Norwegian-British-Swedish Antarctic Expedition, which seems to be going far towards fulfilling the high hopes of its sponsors.

In November 1950 the chartered *Norsel* sailed south again to victual the station at Maudheim in Dronning Maud Land where the fifteen members of the international expedition have now completed their first year's work. It is interesting to record that the scientific strength of this expedition exceeds any to winter in the Antarctic since Scott's second British National Antarctic Expedition of forty years ago, and is the first to have as its primary aim detailed investigations of glaciology and the physics of ice. Among those who sailed with *Norsel* for the season's work are Professor Harald Sverdrup, Director of Norsk Polarinstitut and chief sponsor of the expedition, and Dr Brian Roberts, Senior Research Fellow of the Scott Polar Research Institute.

The *Polar Record* should provide a permanent record of achievement, effort and research connected with the polar regions. The editors aim at completeness of record, though clearly aware that this ideal is unattainable. It is because of this aim that notes may appear as many as several years after the end of the work to which they relate. In the view of the editors, however, mere passage of time, regrettable though that may be, should not preclude the recording of information not earlier available, or previously excluded.

The present issue of the *Polar Record* contains articles dealing with the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey and the establishment, under the Admiralty, of the National Institute of Oceanography, within which the Discovery Investigations will now be administered. The whaling dues in the Falkland Islands Dependencies have provided the financial support for the Discovery Investigations since 1926, and for the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey since 1947. These two projects, the Investigations and the Survey, have much in common and comparison is helpful while a final assessment is deferred.

The Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey, from a naval venture of war, has developed into a long-term organization for administration and research in

the Antarctic in a way never before achieved, or indeed attempted, by any nation. In the last five years United States, Argentine and Chilean parties have wintered at different times in the same area and good work has been done, but the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey alone has maintained wintering parties at several bases for no less than seven successive years of continuous occupation and research.

However, starting in time of war, with all its attendant secrecy, and continued in later years of difficulty for Great Britain and for the world, the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey has not yet gained the appreciation and understanding which it deserves. Stimulated from London, but administered and financed from the Falkland Islands, there has been public misapprehension of the scope and nature of the work, a misapprehension which the press has done little to correct. Detailed and accurate information has been slow to emerge, although the public has been regaled with tales of magnified hardship and sensational rescue. Two articles in this issue of the *Polar Record* may help the reader to acquire a more balanced understanding of what has already been achieved and of what must next be done.